

Talking like a *Shōnen* Hero: Masculinity in Post-Bubble Era Japan through the Lens of *Boku* and *Ore*

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Abstract

Comics (*manga*) and their animated counterparts (*anime*) are ubiquitous in Japanese popular culture, but rarely is the language used within them the subject of linguistic inquiry. This study aims to address part of this gap by analyzing nearly 40 years' worth of *shōnen anime*, which is targeted predominately at adolescent boys.

In the early- and mid-20th century, male protagonists saw a shift in first-person pronoun usage. Pre-war, protagonists used *boku*, but beginning with the post-war Economic Miracle, *shōnen* protagonists used *ore*, a change that reflected a shift in hegemonic masculinity to the salaryman model. This study illustrates that a similar change can be seen in the late-20th century. With the economic downturn, salaryman masculinity began to be questioned, though did not completely lose its hegemonic status. This is reflected in *shōnen* works as a reintroduction of *boku* as a first-person pronoun option for protagonists beginning in the late 90s.

Key words

sociolinguistics, media studies, masculinity, *yakuwarigo*

1. Introduction

Comics (*manga*) and their animated counterparts (*anime*) have had an immense impact on Japanese popular culture. As it appears on television, *anime*, in addition to frequently airing television shows, can also be utilized to sell anything as mundane as convenient store goods to electronics, and characters rendered in an *anime*-inspired style have been used to sell school uniforms (Toku 2007:19). The largest and most lucrative genre of *anime* is *shōnen*. Though the name of the top-selling *shōnen* magazine *Weekly Shōnen Jump* suggests a target audience that is predominately young and male, works within the *shōnen* genre are in actuality consumed across variety of age groups and genders (Japan Magazine Publishers Association 2012).

According to Kinsui (2003), within a given work, a protagonist typically has the least marked speech style unless there exists a narrative reason that justifies otherwise (66-67). Considered more broadly under the framework of “audience design,” (Bell 1984, 2001), whereby the linguistic choices made in constructing the speech of a given fictional character “on the assumption that this audience will find this particular style acceptable and attractive within genre constraints” (Androutsopolous 2012:304). *Shōnen* works are no exception this logic, utilizing a speech pattern that is most expected relative to not only their age, education-level, social class, and so forth, but also to the target audience at the time that that work was released. What constitutes as the least marked style for male speakers in Japanese fictional media, however, has shifted considerably in the last hundred years. In the early- to mid-20th century, this change is realized in an image shift in hegemonic masculinity, or the form of masculinity that is positioned as most ideal, though not necessarily most widespread, within a given culture or cultural context (Connell 2005:79). Following World War 2 (hereafter ‘post-war’), the hegemonic form of masculinity shifted such that the prototypical male protagonist changed from that of the educated, upwardly mobile man to that of the more aggressive, economically powerful one as the Japanese economy quickly expanded during the post-war period. In fiction, this change is realized as a shift in preference from the first-person pronoun *boku*, which in male speakers is associated with the educated speaker noted above, to *ore*, which has more aggressive, “hot-blooded” connotations (Nakamura 2007:64-66).

In the early 1990s, the Japanese economy declined, causing the previously hegemonic *sarariiman* (lit. “salaryman”) model of masculinity brought on by the last several decades of success in the financial quarter to fall in popularity as job security and hiring rates also fell (Dasgupta 2000:199). In analyzing nearly 40 years of *shōnen* protagonists, we can see a similar change in first-person pronoun usage that corresponds with this late 20th century shift in masculinity, resulting in a greater characterological and linguistic range for the portrayal of teen and young adult male characters in media. To put it more generally, language use in Japanese popular media reacted to, rather than directly affected, the societal construction of masculinities, a phenomenon that is similarly reflected in the language use of female characters in *manga* in Unser-Schutz (2015).

Through a text-based analysis of one of the most salient markers of one’s gendered persona in Japanese, the first-person pronoun, this study aims to illustrate not only the ways in which main character figures are designed for their audiences, but also bring to the light the nature of the ideological conversation between a work’s authors and its audience.

2. Fiction and Masculinity in Early- and Mid-20th Century Japan

2.1. “Salaryman Masculinity” in the Post-War Period

With the rapid increase in Western influence during the late 19th and early 20th centuries,

combined with swift economic changes under the influence of World War Two, Japanese masculine ideologies were re-evaluated and resituated multiple times in reaction to shifting domestic and global climates during this period. A particular point of focus for scholars has been “salaryman” (*sarariiman*) masculinity, a cultural, characterological figure defined as a “white-collar, male employee of a private sector organization” who benefits from “lifetime employment, seniority-based salaries and promotions, and a paternalistic concern for the employee on the part of the company in return for steady and diligent loyalty” (Deacon 2013:145). As noted by a number of scholars (e.g., Dasgupta 2000, 2005, 2013, Deacon 2013, Smitsmans 2015), the salaryman model of masculinity was “hegemonic,” which in terms of masculinities, means that among a given hierarchy, that particular form is the most ideal, as well as most idealized in media, though not necessarily most widespread in day-to-day practice (Connell 2005:79).

2.2. The Shift from *Boku* to *Ore*

Momoko Nakamura in her (2007) work *Sei to Nihongo* [“Gender” and Japanese] draws attention to a shift in hegemonic masculine ideology that is observable in the literary realm. Drawing on the original novel Japanese translation of the *Gone with the Wind* (1957) and the Japanese translation of the English movie script (1994), Nakamura illustrates how the linguistic ideologies as related to hegemonic masculinity have changed during the 20th century. In Japanese translations of the same sentence in the English version, Rhett Butler is translated as using *boku* and speaking in a socially distal style in the (1957) version, while in the (1994) version, he speaks *ore* and a much more familiar speaking style.

Of particular note to this study, however, are the first-person pronouns *boku* and *ore*. According to Kinsui (2003), in a given fictional setting, the protagonist¹ typically has the least marked speech style (i.e., most faithful to “Standard”) unless there exists a narrative reason dictating otherwise (92). In the first half of the 20th century, male protagonists typically used the first-person pronoun *boku*, which according to Kinsui, gives the impression of an educated, upwardly mobile student (Ibid.:124). This usage was particularly common in *shōnen* works, where it remained until the 50s, suggesting that the expected protagonist of a *shōnen* work has an interest in education and social mobility. In the mid-20th century, likely beginning with the *shōnen manga Kyojin no hoshi* (1966) and *Ashita no Joe* (1968), it became increasingly common for protagonists to use *ore* as not only audience expectations for the preferred, idealized “hero” changed, but more importantly, the hegemonic masculine ideal had begun to shift (Ibid.:124). During this period, there was an increase in desire for the “hot-blooded hero,” an aggressive, no-nonsense character (Nakamura 2007: 64-65). To put it differently, simply being educated and upwardly-mobile was not sufficient to embody the kind of idealized masculinity that had captured the cultural imagination of male viewers and fiction-oriented content producers during the 50s and 60s.

While salaryman masculinity is by no means the only masculinity that could conceivably utilize the first-person pronoun *ore*, and indeed, *ore* is a common first-person pronoun used among more “hot-blooded” character types, the reason for its consideration in this study has to do with its hegemonic status among various Japanese masculinities. Gendered personality traits are commonly incorporated in media aimed at younger audiences as a kind of social education regarding gender, sexuality, and other stereotypes, especially where mainstream popular media is concerned (e.g., Lippi-Green 1997). As such, because of the imagined target audience of young

¹ Although Rhett Butler was not the protagonist of *Gone with the Wind*, as pointed out by Nakamura (2013), dominant gender ideologies are actually more salient in translated works than works originally created in Japanese.

and adolescent boys, and because of the far-reaching nature of this particular genre in the Japanese popular mediascape, hegemonic masculine ideals may manifest in the speech of *shōnen* protagonists,

While actual day-to-day salarymen may use a variety of different first-person pronouns depending on the relative formality of a given context, the connection between the salaryman character and *ore* can be seen in media sources aimed at salarymen. For example, though the average salaryman at work utilizes either *watashi* (a first-person pronoun that can be utilized by either gender in formal situations) or *boku* (Kinsui 2003:127-128, see also Miyazaki 2004), the inner-thoughts of salaryman can often be seen portrayed using *ore*. One example is from the yearly *Sarariiman Senryuu* competition hosted by life insurance company Dai-Ichi Life. The competition, which has run every year since 1987, is a way for salarymen to submit comical *haiku*-style poems (known as *senryuu*) about their daily lives. Not only do the submissions available on the website use exclusively *ore*, but the advertisements on the website portray caricatured salarymen also using *ore*.² This is due to the fact that while salarymen are beholden to speaking according to certain politeness registers that may demand either *watashi* or *boku*, *ideologically* there is a connection between the personality traits associated with *ore* and the societal image of the *ore*. In other words, *ore* is in an “indirect indexical” (see Ochs 1992) relationship with the salaryman image, but invoking it in an advertisement (such as for the *Sarariiman Senryuu*) is enough to call upon this image if used in conjunction with any other features of what could be called the “salaryman indexical field.”

3. *Shōnen* Protagonists and Their Speech

3.1. Why *Shōnen Anime*?

For this study, the data under discussion are all *anime* adaptations of *manga* that have run in the *manga* magazine, *Weekly Shōnen Jump*. Frequently abbreviated to just *Shōnen Jump* (or *Jump*), it first began publishing in 1968 as a bimonthly magazine, moving to a weekly format nearly immediately in 1969. In 2012, then-editor Ibaraki Masahiko was quoted as saying that despite the number of female readers, *Shōnen Jump* is designed and written with elementary- and junior high school aged-boys in mind (Yomiuri Shimbun Morning Edition June 16th 2003). This is a trend that is reflected in *Shōnen Jump*'s readership data as of 2012 in demographic information obtained from the Japan Magazine Publishers Association. The company reported a readership that was 79.8% male and 20.2% female, with 63% of readers falling between the ages of 10 and 15. Those below 9 and those older than 16 made up 5.1% and 39.1% of the readership, respectively (Japan Magazine Publishers Association 2012). Additionally, in the third quarter of 2016 (July through September), *Shōnen Jump* printed more copies than any other comic magazine, regardless of demographic (Japan Magazine Publishers Association 2016). This magazine's readership data, combined with its popularity, target audience, as well as its longevity in popular culture, make it a prime candidate for analyzing diachronic representation trends of masculinity in fictional media.

Anime began to be adapted from *Shōnen Jump* shortly after the magazine's inception, with the first *anime* (*Otoko ippiki gaki taishoo*) airing in 1969. Shueisha, the publishing company that owns *Shōnen Jump*, has little to do with its animated adaptations at a production level, however. Works that are adapted from *manga* that run *Shōnen Jump* are managed by numerous different companies, but because these works are likely to retain the same target audience due to their roots in *Shōnen*

² The website for the *Minna no sarariiman senryuu* project is available at <http://event.dai-ichi-life.co.jp/company/senryu/>. Accessed on November 20th, 2016.

Jump and the fact that few major changes are made in their animated adaptations, it is most appropriate to think of these as *Shōnen Jump anime* rather than necessarily as distinct products of their various animation companies.

3.2. Variables

In the full version of this study, the variables under consideration are 1) first-person pronouns, 2) average f0 (perceived pitch), and 3) average range of f0, but the only one that is under discussion for the purposes of this paper is first-person pronouns. In Japanese, first-person pronouns, along with sentence-final particles, are typically cited as particularly salient with regard to gender indexing in a given utterance (SturtzSreetharan 2004, Unser-Schutz 2015). Sentence-final particles, however, regularly change from utterance to utterance (especially in non-fictional discourse), depending on the speaker, as well as context, thus an investigation of their role in masculinity would be better suited by either a corpus-based study, discourse analysis study, or some combination of the two, putting this particular facet of identity construction outside the scope of this study (see Unser-Schutz 2015, SturtzSreetharan 2004, and Ueno 2006 for examples). First-person pronouns, however, are much slower to change diachronically, particularly among female speakers due to the high amount of scrutiny placed on female voices in Japanese. Additionally, even more so than sentence-final particles, first-person pronouns carry salient gender indexing information, due in large part to the traditional prescriptive approach to pronoun usage. According to Ide (1997) Standard Japanese pronouns vary primarily among two axes: gender and formality register. Pronoun usage, however, can differ significantly. Miyazaki (2004) conducted ethnographic work on first-person pronouns in a Tokyo-area junior high school in the late 1990s, and she found that rather than the conceptions in Ide (1997), usage patterns in casual situations were more fluid, which can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. A representation of self-referential pronoun usage according to dominant gender ideologies versus the usages of junior high school students in Tokyo (Miyazaki 2004:261).

	<i>masculine</i>		<i>feminine</i>	
	←		→	
<i>Gendered ideologies</i>	<i>ore/boku</i>			<i>watashi/atashi</i>
<i>Students' patterns</i>	<i>ore</i>	<i>boku</i>	<i>uchi</i>	<i>atashi</i>

Rather than *necessarily* limited based on gender, in casual situations students conceptualized pronoun usage based on a scale of masculine to feminine. Focusing only on male speakers for the purpose of this study, the overwhelming majority of male speakers surveyed in Miyazaki (2004) used *ore* as their pronoun of choice rather than *boku*, which is contrary to Ide (1997), who suggests that *boku* is the more commonly used pronoun by male speakers in casual situations. Despite the fact that *ore* is labeled as “other-deprecatory” in Ide (1997), when asked about this indexical association by Miyazaki, boys who used *ore* just considered *ore* to be the pronoun that boys use (Miyazaki 2004:264). In general, male students considered other male students who used *ore* to be “cool” or “strong,” but some female students felt that *ore*-using boys were “arrogant” (Ibid.:264-265). *Boku*, however, was considered to be “weak,” and the boy who used *boku* nearly exclusively in this study was regularly bullied by his male peers (Ibid.:265). Because of these discrepancies between prescriptive usage and descriptive usage, it seems only logical to choose *boku* and *ore* as the focus of first-person pronoun analysis through which to analyze diachronic trends in masculine ideologies.

In light of the observations by Nakamura (2007) and Kinsui (2003) regarding the *boku* to *ore* shift across the early- and mid-20th century period with the shift in hegemonic masculinity, this study aims to explore whether or not a similar shift in first-person pronoun usage can be seen in the late 90s with the economic downturn.

3.3. Methods

A total of 78 different *anime* series have been adapted from *Shōnen Jump* manga between 1968, the year of *Shōnen Jump*'s first issue, to 2015, when this data was collected. The protagonist of each work was determined based on the work's reported protagonist (designated by the word '*shujinkoo*'). However, because the complete version of this study combines an analysis of first-person pronouns as well as acoustic data, the works analyzed had to be limited based on a number of factors. The principles for exclusion are listed below with the number of works that were excluded for that reason.

- 1) Works produced before 1980 were excluded due to poor audio quality (n = 5)
- 2) Works that were difficult to find were excluded due to lack of data (n = 13)
- 3) Works with female protagonists were excluded due to the focus on male speakers (n = 4)
- 4) Because acoustic measurements are more consistent when taken from a speaker using a calm voice rather than a speaker displaying an extra emotion (e.g. screaming, crying, voice breaking, etc.) (Hirose et al. 2005), works with protagonists that did not utilize a calm voice were excluded (n = 1)
- 5) Works without a singular, designated protagonist (n = 1)

In addition to the above exclusions, only a single season of continuous works were considered such that a protagonist from a show with multiple seasons does not weigh more heavily in the data than a protagonist from a show with fewer seasons. In the case of works that had been remade, the original version was the one considered for data purposes.³ This results in a total of 54 different works under consideration with no repeated protagonists. The number of works surveyed by decade can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 2. Number of works included in analysis by decade.

Decade	Number of Works
1980s	9
1990s	14
2000s	18
2010s	13

In each work, the pronoun used by the protagonist was recorded. Any deviation was noted, though within this data set, characters used only a single pronoun and did not deviate regardless of relative formality of the context in which that character was speaking. This is lack of deviation is notable, as speakers outside of fiction may alter their pronouns within the course of a

³ One exception was made to this in the case of a show that had a poorly reviewed original run, and it was remade within two years with a different voice actor with a several hundred episode run. In this case, the remake was considered.

conversation whether due to formality or even personal whim (Miyazaki 2004).

3.4. Results

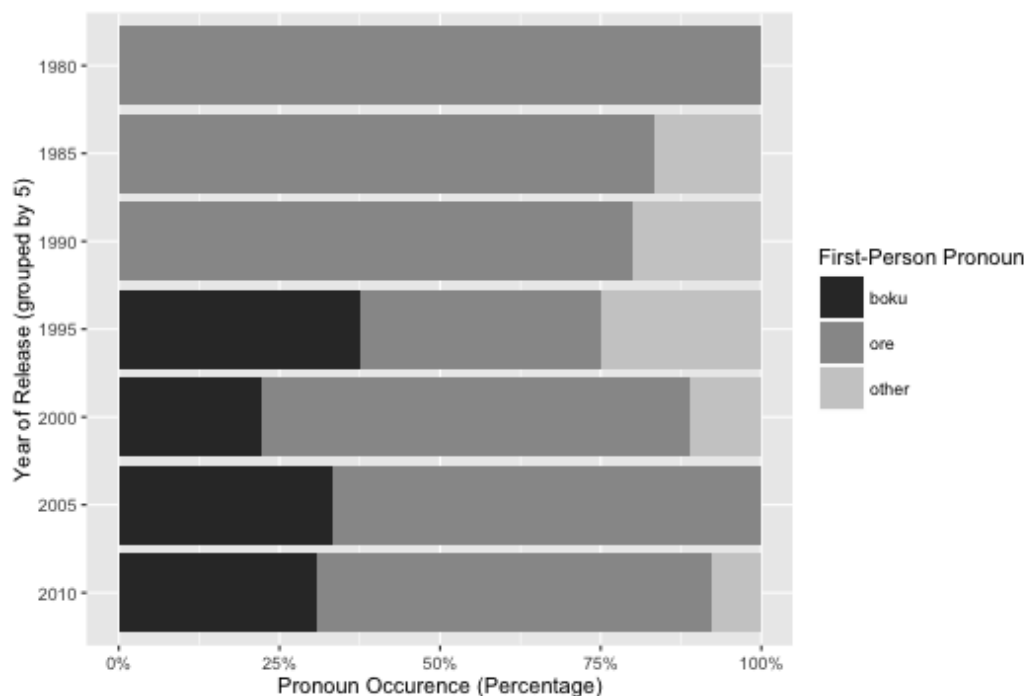
Across the thirty-five total years of analysis, *ore* was by far the most prevalent first-person pronoun used by protagonists, and it was used across age groups. The 2nd most common, *boku*, was used almost predominately by teens, which is in opposition to the ideological association of *boku* in casual speech with children (Nakamura 2007). Other pronouns that appeared were *ora* (n = 1) and *oira* (n = 1), both of which are associated with a “country” archetype, *sessha* (n = 1), which is an out-of-use pronoun used by warrior characters, *watashi* (n = 2), and *washi* (n = 1), which is associated with old men.

Table 3. Number of first-person pronouns used by protagonists by age group.

	child (< 12 yo)	teen (13-19 yo)	adult (> 20 yo)	total
<i>boku</i>	1	11	1	13
<i>ore</i>	8	20	7	35
other	1	2	3	6
total	10	23	11	54

Diachronically, *boku* was not used by any protagonists prior to 1996, which can be seen in Figure 1. below. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the overwhelming majority of first-person pronouns used were *ore*, regardless of age of the protagonist. Thereafter, *boku* reappears, and protagonists using *boku* steadily remain approximately 30% of the represented protagonists through present day.

Figure 1. Percentage of 1PP usage by five-year period.



4. Discussion

As we can see by Figure 1., *ore* was overwhelmingly the most frequently used pronoun for *shōnen* protagonists in the 1980s and first half of the 1990s. To reiterate the earlier quote from Kinsui (2003), the protagonist of a given work uses the least-marked speech style in its fictional environment unless a narrative reason justifies otherwise (66-67), but what constitutes as “least-marked” varies with not only the demographic of the portrayed protagonist, but also the writers of that work as well as the intended audience. For the writers and audience of the 1980s, the “hot-blooded hero,” in whatever manifestation it appeared, was the least-marked protagonist in works created by a nearly exclusively male staff for a young male audience. With the reintroduction of *boku* in the 1990s, we can see that expectations for protagonists in *shōnen* works changed as the power of masculinity structures that were dominant during the 1980s began to weaken. This suggests that not all of the qualities that were desired in protagonists as of the mid-1990s were able to be portrayed with only *ore* as an available first-person pronoun. *Boku*, however, which was still in regular use in natural speech but not used in *Weekly Shōnen Jump* for either protagonists or side characters in this data set, seemed to serve as a viable masculine alternative. This usage is particularly evident in that the characters using *boku* are nearly entirely teenage boys, as seen in Table 3. *Boku* also has an association with young male children (see Miyazaki 2004), but because it is being used by male speakers who would have theoretically outgrown a usage of *boku*, the shift in masculine ideology is particularly evident.

First-person pronouns, as mentioned earlier, are particularly salient with regard to gender indexing, and for male speakers of Standard Japanese, *boku* and *ore* present a contention that does not exist in the same way for non-male speakers. They were not, however, the only pronouns used by protagonists in this analysis. Others that appeared, such as *ora* and *washi*, are actually part of a system of fictionalized voices known as *yakuwarigo*, or ‘role language’ (Teshigawara and Kinsui 2011). In other words, *yakuwarigo* varieties can be understood as enregistered voices, or characterological figures ideologically associated to a particular register of speech (Agha 2005:45). In the case of Japanese, these figures are called forth through the situated use of particular pronouns and sentence-final particles. *Ora*, for example, is associated with a variety known as *nise hoogen*, a kind of fake dialect ascribed to a character to suggest that they are of rural origin (Kinsui 2012:59-62). *Washi*, on the other hand, has long fallen out of use in natural speech, and is associated with an elderly male style known as *hakase kotoba* (Kinsui 2012:202-204). Because of their limited usage in reality, as well as their specific role in fiction, the characterological figure associated with *ora* or *washi* is suggested by even a single use of the pronoun, even without accompanying sentence-final particles.

This degree of ideological association does not exist for *boku* and *ore*, however. Because of their regular use in natural speech by speakers navigating an ever shifting field of gender ideologies, observing *boku* and *ore* as they are used in fictional spaces allows us insight into the meta-linguistic conversation that occurs between the writers and consumers of fictional media, a conversation that is also known as “macrocosmic communication” (Yamaguchi 2007). Because, as pointed out by Unser-Schutz (2010:406), language as it appears in fictional media is a constant tug-of-war between changing ideologies and believability on the part of the audience, by examining the aural and linguistic semiotics that go into character construction, we gain a greater understanding of speakers’ metalinguistic awareness in their social and media-oriented landscapes.

5. Conclusion

Through this diachronic analysis of first-person pronoun usage in *Weekly Shōnen Jump*, we

are able to see a relationship between mainstream masculine ideologies and the linguistic construction of male protagonists in a male-targeted media genre. During the 1980s, *ore* was the first-person pronoun of choice for protagonists in the *shōnen* genre, but in the 1990s the previously hegemonic variety of masculinity began to weaken. This resulted in a loss of dominance for the *ore*-using “hot-blooded hero,” a shift that is evidenced by the reintroduction of the first-person pronoun *boku*, which had fallen out of use in *shōnen* works in the 1960s and denotes an upwardly mobile, educated protagonist (Kinsui 2003:124).

As it stands, research on language use in media is underrepresented in the area of sociocultural linguistics. Further study of linguistic and metalinguistic practices with regard to the construction of characterological figures can only enrich our understanding of the way that speakers interact with variously meaningful ideologies, as well as the way we choose to construct and consume our linguistic landscapes.

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Appendix

Complete List of Works Analyzed in Order of Release Sorted by Decade

- 1980** *Space Cobra* (1982). Produced by TMS Entertainment.
Captain Tsubasa (1983). Produced by Tsuchida Production.
Hokuto no Ken [Fist of the North Star] (1984). Produced by Toei Animation
Dragon Ball (1986). Produced by Toei Animation.
Ginga: Nagareboshi Gin (1986). Produced by Toei Animation.
Saint Seiya (1986). Produced by Toei Animation.
City Hunter (1987). Produced by Sunrise Studios
Kimagure Orange Road (1987). Produced by Studio Pierrot.
Sakigake!! Otokojuku (1988). Produced by Toei Animation.
-
- 1990** *Dragon Quest: Dai no Daiboken* (1991). Produced by Toei Animation.
Yuu Yu Hakusho [Yu Yu Hakusho] (1992). Produced by Studio Pierrot.
SLAM DUNK (1993). Produced by Toei Animation.
Janguru no ooja Taa-chan [Jungle King Tar-chan] (1993). Produced by Group TAC
D • N • A² (1994). Produced by Madhouse and Studio Deen.
NINKU (1995). Produced by Studio Pierrot.
Rurooni Kenshin [Rurouni Kenshin] (1996). Produced by Studio Gallop and Studio Deen.
Jigoku sensei Nuubee [Hell Teacher Nuubee] (1996). Produced by Toei Animation.
Sexy Commando Gaiden: Sugoi yo! Masaru-san (1998). Produced by Magic Bus.
Hoshin engi [Soul Hunter] (1999). Produced by Studio Deen.
Karakurizooshi Ayatsuri Sakon (1999). Produced by Tokyo Movie Shinsha.
HUNTERxHUNTER (1999). Produced by Nippon Animation.
ONE PIECE (1999). Produced by Toei Animation.
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- 2000** *Yuugioh dyueru monsutaazu [Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monsters]* (2000). Produced by Studio Gallop.
Shaman King (2001). Produced by Xebec.
Tenisu no oojisama [The Prince of Tennis] (2001). Produced by Trans Arts.
Hikaru no Go (2001). Produced by Studio Pierrot.
Naruto (2002). Produced by Studio Pierrot.
Whistle! (2002). Produced by Studio Comet.
Bobobo-bo Bo-bobo (2002). Produced by Toei Animation.
Ring ni Kakero (2004). Produced by Toei Animation.
Bleach (2004). Produced by Studio Pierrot.
Ichigo 100% [Strawberry 100%] (2005). Produced by Madhouse.
Eyeshield 21 (2005). Produced by Studio Gallop.
BLACK CAT (2005). Produced by Gonzo.
Gintama (2006). Produced by Sunrise Studios.
D.Gray-man (2006). Produced by TMS Entertainment.
Busoo Renkin [Buso Renkin] (2006). Produced by Xebec.
DEATH NOTE (2006). Produced by Madhouse.
Kateikyoosi Hitman Reborn! [Reborn!] (2006). Produced by Artland.
To LOVERu -Toraburu- [To Love-ru] (2008). Produced by Xebec.
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- 2010** *Nurarihyon no mago [Nura: Rise of the Yokai Clan]* (2010). Produced by Studio Deen.
Bakuman. (2010). Produced by J.C.Staff

Level E (2011). Produced by Pierrot and David Production.
Beelzebub (2011). Produced by Pierrot+.
Toriko (2011). Produced by Ufotable.
Sket Dance (2011). Produced by Tatsunoko Production.
Kuroko no Baske [*Kuroko's Basketball*] (2012). Produced by Production I.G.
Haikyuu!! [*Haikyuu!!*] (2014). Produced by Production I.G.
Nisekoi [*Nisekoi: False Love*] (2014). Produced by Shaft.
World Trigger (2014). Produced by Toei Animation.
Ansatsu Kyōshitsu [*Assassination Classroom*] (2015). Produced by Lerche.
Shokugeki no Soma [*Food Wars!: Shokugeki no Soma*] (2015). Produced by J.C.Staff.
Battle Spirits: Burning Soul [*Battle Spirits: Burning Soul*] (2015). Produced by BN Pictures.